



# Corvairsation

[www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org)

Tucson Corvair Association  
Volume 28, Number 5

Tucson, Arizona  
October 2003



Photos from 2003 CORSA  
National Convention



## COMING EVENTS

- October 22 - October monthly meeting, Mountain View Restaurant, 1220 E. Prince Rd., 6:30 p.m.
- November 12 - TCA board meeting, Mimi's Café, 4420 N. Oracle Rd., 6:30 p.m.
- November 15 - Tune-up Clinic, Torpeys', 9165 N. Desert Ironwood Pl., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- November 19 - November monthly meeting, Mountain View Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.
- December 17 - Christmas Party, DMAFB Officers' Club

Tucson Corvair Association  
Established 1975

Corvairsation is a monthly publication of the Tucson Corvair Association, which is dedicated to the preservation of the Corvair model of the Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors. The Tucson Corvair Association is a chartered member of the Corvair Society of American (CORSA), Chapter 857.

Monthly Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except December. One technical/social event is planned for each month except July and August.

Membership Dues are \$15 per year for singles and \$18 per year for families. Initial dues are \$15 for singles and \$22 for families (includes name tags). Make checks payable to Tucson Corvair Association.

Change of Address: Report any change of address or phone number to the Membership Chairperson. Do not report such changes to the Corvairsation Editor.

CORSA Membership Dues are \$30 per year (\$70 for 26 months) and include a subscription to the CORSA Communique, a monthly publication. CORSA membership is not required for membership in the TCA, but is highly recommended. See any TCA officer for more information.

Classified Ads are free to members and \$3.00 per 4-line ad to all others.

Deadline for materials submitted for publication in the Corvairsation is the 10<sup>th</sup> of month to the Editor.

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WEB SITE: [www.corvairs.org](http://www.corvairs.org)

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>  
>TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION

>24 SEPTEMBER 2003 MEETING

>Present: Lance Gillingham, Dave Baker, Nancy Goodman, Allen Elvick, Bill  
>Maynard, Chris and Frank Sharp, Don Robinson, John Torpey, Art and Paul  
>Dunn.

>  
> In Chris Cunningham's absence, the meeting was called to order at 7:00  
>by vice-president John T. Paul announced that Richard Thompson has  
>recently joined, and had hoped to attend this meeting. Richard owns a '66  
>Monza, Burgundy. Our membership now stands at 42 units.

> Upcoming events include: Casa Car Show in 10 days. Passes were  
>distributed. We will have 8 cars entered and they will meet at Ajo Café at  
>7:30 a.m. Barry's company has indicated it will provide a sun shade. A  
>tune up clinic will be held Sat. 15 Nov. at either Torpey's or Chris  
>Cunningham's. Our Holiday dinner will be Wed. 17 Dec. at DMAFB Officers'  
>Club. Announcement of which gate will be in use will come later. Dave and  
>Nancy will probably attend the Fan Belt Toss in Palm Springs, and it is  
>believed from last month that the Youngs will also attend.

> The Sharps indicated they were the only TCA members participating in  
>the Miata Fun Rally 10 days before, and they in a VW at that, but they had  
>an enjoyable time. One car from the British Car Club participated.  
>Appreciation was given to the Dunns for their efforts toward an enjoyable  
>tour of Fort Huachuca's museums.

> In officer reports, Allen reported \$4606.18 available at the end of  
>August, with one membership to be added and the CASA show fees to go out.  
>Paul is working on updating the website. Lance was given the '62 owner's  
>manual for the archives from last month. He has organized all previous  
>Corvairsations in binders, as well as Corsa Communiques. Paul and Art have  
>other Corvairsations which may supplement any missing ones. Don highlighted  
>the merchandise he has for sale.

> Member Suzanne Cauble has suffered a severe injury to her leg in a  
>fall and was hospitalized, but is now reported to be recovering in rehab.  
>Chris C. is anxious to be rid of the '66 Monza and to that end sent a video  
>of it to whet our appetities. However, no good connection between VCR and  
>monitor could be made; so the video, as well as the car, reportedly, left a  
>little to be desired. The meeting was adjourned without a raffle.

>  
>Respectfully submitted,  
>Chris Sharp



## ... from the President

The 24<sup>th</sup> annual Casa Car Show on October 4<sup>th</sup> was a big success. The show included nine beautiful Corvairs among over 600 other vehicles. The show also marked our Club's 24<sup>th</sup> appearance in the fundraising event. Each car was awarded a dash plaque for participating. All the cars were judged by public ballots distributed throughout the day-long event. This year's winning car was a 1955 Ford. Other awards were given out before announcing the raffle winner of the butterscotch colored Corvette at 5pm. I'm sure the winner will be the only one in town with a butterscotch Corvette: the only one with a car that color, period! It was difficult to look at.

Not far away from the main tent, the Corvairs showed very well, with many colors represented - except butterscotch. We did have a mint green car though, but it was easy on the eyes.

Happy motoring!

*Chris*

BELOW: Gordon's '63 Spyder.



BELOW: Dave Lynch applies Armorall to Patrick's arms.



BELOW: Corvairs on the grass near the main tent.



BELOW: Should I put the top down?



BELOW: The Robinson's '62 700 4-dr Sedan.



BELOW: Herb and his Stage II Yenko Stinger.



# CORVAIR CHRONOLOGY

May 1952 – Edward N. Cole moves from Cadillac to Chevrolet's top engineering spot. Brings key men with him. Their assignment: "Enliven Chevrolet's staid product line." Cole has already put considerable thought and work into rear-engined experimentals.

1955 – Chevy R & D chief Maurice Olley reports to Cole on various engine placements and drive configurations in terms of economics and manufacturing feasibility. Preliminary research begins on 2-piece aluminum flat 6. But idea is soon shelved due to lack of technology.

July 1956 – Cole becomes Chevrolet's general manager; moves ahead with Corvair (called Holden La Salle II) prototypes.

August 1957 – Ned Nickles begins styling studies for Corvair under watchful eyes of Cole and Harley Earl.

September 1957 – GM president Harlow Curtice sees styling clays, hears Cole's presentation, gives his blessing. Soon afterward, GM's engineering policy committee and board of directors also approve Corvair. For the first time, it's officially on its way to production.

Winter 1957 thru Summer 1958 – Corvair evolves mechanically. Its engine and drivetrain tested in cobbled Porsches, a Vauxhall, and one full mechanical prototype. Cole pleased.

Spring 1958 – Second and third "Holden" mechanical prototypes built and tested. Detail engineering and planning for new Willow Run Corvair plant now at full tilt.

July 1958 – Conversion of GM plant at Willow Run started: Corvair's official home.

September 1958 – Motor Life predicts the Corvair in amazingly accurate detail, based on tooling orders.

May 22, 1959 – GM announces it will introduce a compact for 1960. Name Corvair becomes official. (Chrysler had made a similar announcement on the Valiant on March 10 and so had Ford on the Falcon, February 19.)

October 2, 1959 – First Corvair bows. Falcon debuts six days later, and Valiant arrives October 29. Falcon outsells Corvair immediately.

April 1960 – Motor Trend names Corvair *Car of the Year*.

May 1960 – First Corvair coupe arrives, as does Monza 900 series, with 95-bhp engine and 4-speed gearbox optional. A Paxton-supercharged Corvair sedan hits 0-60 in 15.8 seconds, as compared with 21.2 seconds stock. Top speed increases from 88 to 95mph. Corvair is turning into a performance machine.

September 1960 – Lakewood wagon introduced for 1961; also Greenbrier, Corvan, Rampside, and Loadside vans and pickups. Bore increased from 3 3/8 to 3 7/16 inches to up displacement from 140 to 145cid.

March 1961 – First Monza sedan debuts. Ed Cole leaves Chevrolet to become GM car and truck VP. His place is taken by Semon E. Knudsen.

September 1961 – Chevy II introduced. Competes directly with Falcon and Valiant but also with Corvair, particularly wagons.

April 1962 – Corvair wagon dropped; 32,120 produced. Monza convertible introduced. Spyder package released. Has 150-bhp turbocharged engine. Two-passenger Sebring Spyder makes New York show.

May 1962 – Design begins on 1965 Corvair under Ron Hill. It's based largely on Monza GT showcar.

June 1962 – Monza GT coupe bows at Elkhart Lake.

March 1963 – Corvair Bertone Testudo at Geneva salon.

April 1963 – Monza SS showcar at New York auto show.

October 1963 – Spyder becomes a standard 1964 model instead of an option package. Stroke increased from 2.60 to 2.94 inches to up displacement to 164cid. Swing axle suspension bolstered by addition of factory leaf spring. Further 1964 suspension improvements include standard front stabilizer bar plus recalibrated coil springs and shocks.

April 15, 1964 – Ford releases Mustang, which was conceived as response to Corvair, and Mustang becomes a prime contributor to Corvair's demise.

September 1964 – 1965 Corvairs bow with new styling and fully independent rear suspension. Car remains basically the same as this through the end of production.

December 1964 – Greenbrier dropped; only 1528 built this model year.

April 1965 – Management instructs Chevrolet engineers not to further develop future Corvairs – to freeze design and merely meet safety and smog standards.

November 1965 – Ralph Nader publishes *The Corvair Story*, an article in *The Nation*, which formed the basis for the first chapter (only) of his book, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, also published the same month.

1965 – This becomes peak year for the restyled Corvair, but it can't stem the Mustang's tide. With greater performance demands, turbocharged engine delivers 180bhp. Nader's book plus the Mustang spell a downhill run for the Corvair.

October 1966 – 1967 Corvairs introduced. Corsa models and 140bhp engine dropped but later re-instated due to popular demand.

March 1967 – Astro I showcar at New York show.

October 1967 – Four-doors dropped with 1968 introductions.

May 14, 1969 – The last Corvair, a golden coupe, rolls off assembly line. By this time Corvair quality has reached a very low ebb. The factory offers a \$150 certificate with each 1969 Corvair good on the purchase of a new Chevrolet anytime before 1974.

Total Production – 1,710,018

From "The Compleat History of Corvair for the Compleat Corvair Nut!!", Volume 1, by John Wipff,

## Spares & Vairs

For Sale: 1962 4-Door Monza, automatic, factory air conditioning (it works), 85K original miles. 102 hp, Original white Paint and beautiful original interior with front bucket seats. Now reduced to only \$2250. Drive anywhere! Call Dick (520) 299-4723.

For sale: 1966 Monza coupe, 110h.p., automatic, new interior, good project car. Best offer. For details, Call Chris (520) 670-9676.



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Ads are free to TCA members. \$3.00 for up to four lines to non-members

**TUCSON CORVAIR ASSOCIATION  
CORVAIR SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
CHAPTER 857**

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING IS THE FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

(Except as scheduled in December)

Meeting Place: Mountain View Restaurant, 1220 E. Prince Road

Parking lot bull session at 6:00 pm - Dinner at 6:20 (optional)

Meeting Starts at 7:00 pm

from the editor.....

The Palm Springs Fan Belt Toss is November 7-9, so if you plan to attend, make your reservations and get registered pronto. The registration form was in the September *Corvairsation*.

Bring your Corvaire to the tune-up at Torpeys' in November. It's a great time to get things in order for the coming year. TCA will provide sodas, etc. Please bring snacks to share.

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First Class Mail



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